



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

IN MEMORIAM
JOSEPH HODGES CHOATE

DIED MAY 14, 1917

INCORPORATOR OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, 1870—TRUSTEE CONTINUOUSLY FROM 1870 UNTIL THE DAY OF HIS DEATH—FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT, 1910—1917

PREËMINENT as was Mr. Choate in the spheres of law, diplomacy, and statesmanship, responsive as he always was to every call for public service, his memory will be cherished by The Metropolitan Museum of Art for his wise and efficient leadership at the time of its organization and in the earlier years of its development. To him in large degree the Museum owes the breadth of its original scope, embracing all arts and embracing art in its relation to education and practical life as well as to the enjoyment of the beautiful. To him also the Museum is largely indebted for the form of its relation to the City of New York, which has made it essentially a public institution, a museum of the people, sustained largely by the people and administered for the people.

He was a member of the Provisional Committee, appointed in 1869, following the initial meeting of public-spirited citizens of New York under the presidency of the venerable William Cullen Bryant, when they determined that "it was expedient and highly desirable that efficient and judicious measures should at once be initiated with reference to the establishment in the city of a Museum of Art, on a scale worthy of the metropolis and of a great nation." Though at that time young in years, he was already distinguished in ability and public spirit.

Nearly half a century has elapsed since then. During all that time, except when patriotic duty called him to represent his country at the Court of St. James's, Mr. Choate was constant in his watchfulness over the institution which he helped to found, always ready as its wise counselor, gracious as its spokesman, a true prophet of its future. A member of the Executive Committee of its first Board of Trustees, he ever remained active, helpful, cheerful,

giving, as he himself said of his associates, "unstinted time and study to the advancement of their cherished purpose"—the encouragement and development of the study of the fine arts, and the application of the arts to manufactures and practical life, and to that end, of furnishing popular instruction. Even during these later years, after having declined to accept the Presidency of the Museum, he continued his active service both as First Vice-President and as a member of its Executive Committee.

The Trustees of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, deeply conscious of their loss in his death, record their testimony to the high service rendered by him to the Museum during his forty-seven years of trusteeship, and through it to his city and his country.

As illustrative of his relations to the Museum, his grasp of its scope, and his hopes for its future, many of which have been realized, they direct that the essential parts of his address at the opening of the first Museum building in Central Park on March 30, 1880, be reprinted in the next issue of the MUSEUM BULLETIN.

ADDRESS OF
JOSEPH H. CHOATE

AT THE OPENING OF THE MUSEUM BUILDING
MARCH 30, 1880

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN: If, as has sometimes been said, it is dangerous to know too much about Art, you must admire the caution and wisdom of these Trustees in putting forward their most ignorant member to express their sentiments on this occasion.

In their name I bid you a most hearty welcome to these halls. We congratulate ourselves upon the fortunate auspices by which the day is marked. An era of unexampled prosperity gladdens all hearts, and favors so bold an undertaking. The State for almost the first time in its history, with liberal bounty has provided and equipped a suitable building as the permanent home of the Museum. The presence of the honored President of the Nation

assures us of that general and popular sympathy without which no such institution can prosper, and this great company of the fair, the wise and the powerful, representing the best influences of the city, is itself a living guarantee of substantial encouragement and support.

I shall not attempt to narrate the trials and struggles through which this youthful institution has reached this tenth anniversary of its birth. It has had the usual lot of all infants, and has narrowly but happily escaped the inevitable perils and maladies by which the majority of such undertakings are strangled in their cradles.

The little that it has already achieved as the beginning only of what it hopes in after times to accomplish is now spread before your eyes—for your criticism, certainly—and, if it meets your approval, for your hearty coöperation.

He who returns to his native land with fresh memories of the Louvre and of Kensington, to compare those splendid results of time and of wealth with this our feeble embryo, may well regard it with concern and solicitude; but, could he point to one of the grand old museums of Europe that in its tenth year, without the aid of governmental subsidies or of royal bounty, could show such valuable results as those which are now and here exhibited? Indeed, the Duke of Argyll, a high authority on such a subject, was pleased, on his recent visit, to say to General Cesnola that the British Museum, of which he is himself a trustee, had not in thirty years from its foundation accomplished so much. We beg you always to remember that what has already been done is the work of a very small number of persons, who fully recognize the fact that a great and useful museum of art could not be created in one decade or one generation; that nothing is so hard as a beginning, and that it must be left to time, and to a larger knowledge and riper experience to improve and perfect it.

I will not call a blush to the cheeks of my associates who sit around me, by telling how they have labored and suffered during these ten tedious years to bring to pass the little that this hour has realized. But some

of them have poured out their money like water, and each in his degree has given unstinted time and study to the advancement of their cherished purpose.

The erection of this building at the expense of the public treasury for the uses of an art museum was an act of signal forethought and wisdom on the part of the Legislature. A few reluctant taxpayers have grumbled at it as beyond the legitimate objects of government, and if art were still, as it once was, the mere plaything of courts and palaces, ministering to the pride and the luxury of the rich and the voluptuous, there might be some force in the objection. But now that art belongs to the people, and has become their best resource and most efficient educator, if it be within the real objects of government to promote the general welfare, to make education practical, to foster commerce, to instruct and encourage the trades, and to enable the industries of our people to keep pace with instead of falling hopelessly behind those of other States and other Nations, then no expenditure could be more wise, more profitable, more truly republican. It is this same old-fashioned and exploded idea, which regards all that relates to art as the idle pastime of the favored few, and not, as it really is, as the vital and practical interest of the working millions, that has so long retarded its progress among us.

The most enlightened nations of Europe have long since learned to treat the whole subject of art education as one of governmental and public concern, and have freely expended large amounts of public money in making it general, as the only way to make it practical and effective.

Museums and galleries, schools of design, and the universal teaching of drawing as a necessary element in the education of all children, have been the chief means adopted, and with marvellous results.

In our own country almost nothing in the same direction has yet been undertaken. The State of Massachusetts and the City

of Boston, those bold pioneers in all good ideas and good works for America, have set us a wise example, and if New York would maintain her title as the Empire State she cannot neglect the warnings that come to her from all sources. It was in this belief that the founders of this Museum, stimulated by the wise examples set them abroad, and conscious at the same time that whatever was to be done for art among us must be begun, at least, by private means and personal enterprise, projected the undertaking whose progress you have to day been invited to witness.

They knew the difficulties that lay before them, and fully appreciated the burdens which they volunteered to assume. They looked for success only to the far-distant future and certainly never expected in so short a time to accomplish the half of what has already been done. Let me briefly state to you their purposes. They believed that the diffusion of a knowledge of art in its higher forms of beauty would tend directly to humanize, to educate and refine a practical and laborious people; that though the great masterpieces of painting and sculpture which have commanded the reverence and admiration of mankind, and satisfied the yearnings of the human mind for perfection in form and color, which have served for the delight and the refinement of educated men and women in all countries, and inspired and kept alive the genius of successive ages, could never be within their reach, yet it might be possible in the progress of time to gather a collection of works of merit, which should impart some knowledge of art and its history to a people who were yet to take almost their first lessons in that department of knowledge. Their plan was not to establish a mere cabinet of curiosities which should serve to kill time for the idle, but gradually to gather together a more or less complete collection of objects illustrative of the history of art in all its branches, from the earliest beginnings to the present time, which should serve not only for the instruction and entertainment of the people, but should also show to the students and artisans of every branch of industry, in the high and acknowledged stand-

ards of form and of color, what the past had accomplished for them to imitate and excel.

It was also a prominent feature of the trustees' plan, in which some progress has already been made, to establish a Museum of Industrial Art, as distinct from the beautiful in art, for the direct and practical instruction of artisans, showing the whole progress of development from the raw material, through every artistic process to the most highly wrought product of which art is capable. They hoped also to establish under the direct auspices of the Museum, industrial schools for the thorough education of apprentices and workmen in their several branches of industry. Thanks to the liberal interest of a single public spirited citizen, two such schools are already in successful operation, and others will be opened as soon as means for the purpose are realized.

The importance of that particular effort cannot be overstated. Why should we depend upon the Old World forever for almost every object of beauty that our lives require? Why should we continue to pay as we do, a hundred and fifty millions a year to the nations of Europe for the products of art industry which our civilization demands, when by instructing our artisans as they have instructed theirs we can make them all for ourselves? It is time for a thoughtful and industrious and a proud nation to answer such questions as these.

It is the popular and practical tendency of modern art which chiefly engages the attention of the trustees, and strict attention to it must be essential to the success of this or any other museum. We dare even to believe that already the indirect influence of this undertaking upon the taste of the community and of the trades is beginning to be felt. The splendid display of articles of artistic beauty in our shops, the improved taste exhibited in the decoration and furnishing of our dwellings, and the great increase in the purchase and importation of real works of art, when compared with the meagre and barren memory of the last generation, indicate a rapid and

permanent advance in the general knowledge of the subject in the last ten years, and we have good reason to believe that when the irresistible inventive genius of America shall be instructed and regulated by a technical training that shall be worthy of it, our domestic product of articles of beauty shall in time equal and supplant the foreign importations upon which we now almost exclusively depend, and that at last American art shall furnish all that is best adapted for the decoration of American life. It is only within the present century that the fine arts, which were always before the private property of the rich, have extended their range so as to provide for the actual wants and comfort of the people. The great art teacher of England has said that "at the moment when in any ancient kingdom you point to the triumphs of its greatest artist, you point also to the determined hour of the kingdom's decline; that the names of the great painters are like passing bells; in the name of Velasquez you hear sounded the fall of Spain; in the name of Titian, that of Venice; in the name of Leonardo, that of Milan; in the name of Raphael, that of Rome." But surely in the art of the future, which rests upon and ministers to the education, the wants and the daily life of the people, all this will be changed and the perfection of a nation's arts will mark the period of her highest prosperity.

. . .

Whoever labors for the growth of American art must look for his reward not to this age only, but largely to the distant future. And who shall dare to set limits to the possibilities that await the energies of this vast people in any department of human effort? It is not fifty years since the possibility of an American literature was scouted and sneered at by the scholars of England, and already the proud Court of St. James has welcomed an American historian to whom the world of letters

paid homage, and an American poet of whom the English speaking race is proud, as the fitly designated representatives of the young Republic, and who in the light of this experience shall dare to despise or doubt the prophecy that in the fulness of time American architects and painters and sculptors may be held in equal honor?

A SUMMER EXHIBITION

THE Trustees announce an event of very considerable interest, the exhibition during the summer months and into the autumn of the important collection of pictures belonging to John H. McFadden of Philadelphia. The paintings are by the most famous British artists of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During the building of the owner's new house these pictures have been publicly shown, first in the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia and lately in the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh. The collection has been forming for the last thirty years and is regarded by certain authorities as the greatest in private hands consisting solely of works of this school. Beginning with Hogarth, the first of the painters in whom the characteristics of the English temperament found expression, most of the great names are represented. There are excellent examples of the portrait painters, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, Raeburn, Hoppner, and Lawrence, and the landscape of the epoch is shown in its imaginative aspect with Wilson and Turner and realistically with Crome and Constable. There are forty-five pictures in the group and each is worthy of special study. Few private collections have the singleness of purpose and the homogeneity of effect that this one displays, each work enhancing the appearance of its neighbors.

The exhibition will take place in Gallery 6 on the second floor, beginning as soon as possible after June 18, and will last for about four months.